SECRET

410.2

CA - Mr. Martin

February 8, 1955

EK/OSD NND 931006 5/22/95

CA - Mr. Comiskey

Notes on Offshore Island Activities - No. 9

Following are items of interest concerning activities on and around the off-shore islands, taken from documents which I have read during the period January 26 - February 3, 1955.

General

During the week ending January 31 there was relatively little Chinese Communist activity against GRC-held off-shore islands, although there was a bombing attack against the Ta-ch'ens on January 30. The Chinese Communists were, however, busy in improving island and mainland facilities, including airfields, which would be useful in case of attack against the off-shore islands.

GRC planes were active in bombing communist shipping and Ichiang in the Ta-ch'en area. GRC pilots claimed substantial success against communist warships, some of them as large as 1500 tons, but their claims have not been confirmed. GRC planes also dropped rice and leaflets over Fukien and Chekiang.

Yu-shan

On January 31 two Chinese Communist destroyers and two mine-sweepers reportedly shelled Yu-shan for about 5 minutes, but without effect since the shells fell short. US G-2 thinks this shelling might be a prelude to an assault on the island, which is considered a probable early target of the Chinese Communists.

Ta-ch'ens

During the week there were sporadic exchanges of artillery fire between the Ta-ch'ens and Ichiang. On January 30, 5 TU-5's dropped leaflets and incendiary bombs on the Ta-ch'ens; cover was provided by 8-17 MIG-15's. Some warehouses were set afire and some probably destroyed. Military losses were 20 WIA, 2 KIA and 1 missing. Civilian losses were 16 dead, 23 wounded. says the U.S. Navy estimates it will take from 5 to 7 days to evacuate troops, civilians who wish to leave, and equipment from the Ta-ch'ens.

State + OSD Bl. AS

Ichiang

A number of Chinese Communist vessels including LST's, LCI's, motorized and sail junks arrived at Ichiang, presumably carrying equipment and supplies for possibile action against the Ta-ch'ens. GRC planes bombed Ichiang during

the

SECRET

the week with undisclosed results but were unable to stop the sea lift to the island. GRC planes encountered enemy fighters in this and the Ta-ch'en area but managed to return safely to their home bases.

Pi-shan

GRC artillery has fired on enemy troops on adjacent islands. The Chinese Communists are building up their positions on the coast opposite to the Pi-shans.

Matsu

Communists have built up and repaired communications, barracks, field works and gun emplacements on the Peiling Peninsula, thereby increasing their ability to interdict the Matsu island group by land-based artillery fire. U.S. G-2 comments the Matsu group is now in a vulnerable position somewhat similar to the Tach'ens.

Quemoy

STATE OSD Bl, A5

reported the defensive capability of the Quemoy garrison had been improved, morale was holding up, and divisional commanders were energetic and effective, but it was estimated that Peiping could bring in enough troops for a successful assault against the GRC forces alone in two days, although air and artillery support might take longer. STATE OSD Bl, A5 the Communists were building or repairing 6 airfields in Fukien, capable of handling jets, for possible use against Quemoy. GRC artillery on Quemoy took enemy shipping under fire without scoring any hits and some counter-artillery fire was directed against the mainland.

Other

Seven flights of unidentified aircraft flew from Weihsien to Shanghai on January 29, possibly to strengthen the air defense of Shanghai and possibly to relieve some other unit. The 2nd Armored Division, which saw action in Korea and which is reportedly armed with Russian 122mm. guns was reported to have moved into position along the coast for possible use against the off-shore islands. Intelligence estimates of Chinese Communist capabilities regarding the off-shore islands remain the same as reported previously, and analysts doubt their plans will be deferred because of U.S. action except possibly in the case of the Ta-ch'ens.

FE:CA:SAComiskey:ek